

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the examination to date and respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and reasons that follow.

The only remaining issue is obviousness.

I. Status of the Claims

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite formula (4) and the corresponding limitations to r, s, t and u as previously recited in claim 5. Accordingly, no new matter has been introduced. Claim 5 has been cancelled. With this amendment, claims 1, 3-4 and 6-13 are currently pending to be examined on their merits.

II. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Claim Rejections

Claims 1 and 3-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over WO 2003/046080 to Kinouchi *et al.* ("Kinouchi") and WO 2002/091507 to Hirano *et al.* ("Hirano"). See Office Action dated September 1, 2010. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Applicants maintain the position as set forth in the June 4, 2010 Reply that the present claims are non-obvious over the teachings of Kinouchi or Hirano, either alone or in combination.

Moreover, Applicants maintain the position set forth in the September 16, 2009 Reply that the presently claimed copolymers demonstrate unexpected results as described in, for example, Example 2 in the present Specification. Since the Office Action acknowledges this position and argues that the unexpected results are not commensurate with the scope of the claims, see pages 4-5, this appears to be the only remaining issue at hand.

While not acquiescing to the grounds of the rejections and merely to advance the prosecution of this application towards allowance, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to comprise a block copolymer comprising at least one segment having an acid group

represented by formula (4). With this amendment, each aromatic ring in the acid group is sulfonated and the acid group can be a polyether sulfone. Accordingly, the scope of the claims are fully commensurate with the evidence of unexpected results.

At least in view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing or a credit card payment form being unsigned, providing incorrect information resulting in a rejected credit card transaction, or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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